

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 5096

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR TU

SUBJECT: GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS - AEGEAN CONTINENTAL
SHELF DISPUTE

1. FORMIN BITSIOS TOLD ME TODAY THAT THE GOG WAS TRYING TO GET THE TURKS TO ACCELERATE THE TIMETABLE FOR THEIR NEXT BILATERAL MEETING CONCERNING THEIR DISPUTE OVER THE CONTINENTAL SHELF IN THE AEGEAN. BITSIOS SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN PRACTICALLY NO MOVEMENT ON THIS SUBJECT SINCE HIS MEETING IN ROME WITH FORMIN CAGLAYANGIL IN MAY. THE NEXT STEP, HE SAID, WAS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO SIT DOWN AND WORK OUT THE PRECISE LANGUAGE FOR JOINT SUBMISSION TO THE WORLD COURT IN THE HAGUE OF THE "COMPROMIS" CONCERNING THE DISPUTE. THE GREEK SIDE WAS READY TO DO THIS AT ONCE, BUT THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT, EVEN THOUGH IT HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO SUBMIT THE MATTER TO THE WORLD COURT, CONTINUED TO PROCRASTINATE ON MEETING WITH GREEKS TO ESTABLISH THE TERMS OF THE SUBMISSION.

2. BITSIOS SAID THAT THE LAST WORD HE HAD HAD FROM CAGLAYANGIL ON THIS SUBJECT WAS THAT THE TURKISH SIDE EXPECTED TO BE READY FOR BILATERAL MEETINGS IN SEPTEMBER, AND BITSIOS WAS EXPLORING DIRECTLY AND PRIVATELY WITH CAGLAYANGIL WHETHER OR NOT THIS SCHEDULE COULD BE
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ACCELERATED. BITSIOS SAID THAT THE TURKS ALSO

WANTED TO DISCUSS THE "JOINT VENTURE" APPROACH TO EXPLORATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AEGEAN, AND HE SAID THAT THE GOG WOULD BE QUITE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THIS IN DETAIL WITH THE TURKS ONCE THE "COMPROMIS" HAD BEEN AGREED AND SUBMITTED TO THE WORLD COURT. BITSIOS SAID HE REMAINED STRONGLY OF THE OPINION THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE BEST SERVED BY SUBMITTING THIS MATTER TO THE WORLD COURT FOR CONSIDERATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THIS WOULD TEND TO DEFUSE THE PROBLEM, ALLOW BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH THE MATTER IN TERMS OF DOMESTIC PUBLIC AND POLITICAL OPINION, AND PROVIDE A DESIRABLE BACKDROP FOR BILATERAL DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE "JOINT VENTURES" AND OTHER MEANS OF GREEK-TURKISH COOPERATION IN THE AEGEAN. KUBISCH

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